

# Alcohol



# Depressant

- Alcohol is considered a depressant because it slows down the central nervous system.
  - This causes a decrease in motor coordination, reaction time, and intellectual performance.
  - At high doses, alcohol can cause the respiratory system to slow down which can lead to a coma or death.
  - Drinking alcohol will make you more depressed.

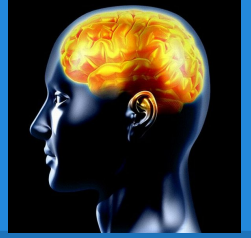


# Other Names

- Booze
- Brew
- Liquid courage
- Juice
- Cold one
- Hard stuff
- Hooch
- Jack
- Pre-game
- Moonshine
- Sauce
- Tipple



# Psychological Effects



Alcohol is a depressant that prevents normal brain processes and functions.

- Short Term Effects
  - Can reduce or create stress depending on the person by stimulating stress hormones.
  - Can make people feel happy, sad, or aggressive.
  - Removes inhibitions.
- Long Term Effects
  - Without addressing the underlying cause, people can become dependant on alcohol because it relieves their stress and anxiety.
  - Insomnia
  - Nightmares
  - Delirium tremens- a psychotic condition typical of withdrawal in chronic alcoholics, involving tremors, hallucinations, anxiety, and disorientation (5% death rate).
  - Depression



# Physical Effects

Drinking too much alcohol can increase your risk of developing certain cancers such as:

- Mouth
- Esophagus
- Throat
- Liver
- Breast

Drinking a lot over a long period of time or too much on a single occasion can damage the heart in such ways that cause:

- Cardiomyopathy- stretching and drooping of heart muscle
- Arrhythmias- Irregular heart beat
- Stroke
- High blood pressure

Heavy drinking takes a toll on the liver as well and can cause such problems as:

- Steatosis, or fatty liver
- Alcoholic hepatitis
- Fibrosis
- Cirrhosis



# Physical Effects Cont.

- Alcohol interferes with the brain's communication pathways, and can affect the way the brain looks and works which can then lead to problems such as mood and behavior changes.
- Alcohol causes the pancreas to produce toxic substances which can eventually lead to pancreatitis.
  - Pancreatitis = dangerous inflammation/swelling of the blood vessels in the pancreas that prevents proper digestion
- Drinking too much can also weaken your immune system, making your body a much easier target for diseases.
- Other effects on the body include:
  - Slurred speech
  - Lack of coordination
  - Hallucinations
  - Blackouts
  - Dependence
  - Shifty eyes
  - Malnutrition
  - Muscle Cramps
  - Stomach distress



# Societies views on alcohol

Today, millions of individuals enjoy drinking alcohol for many different reasons

Some reasons include:

- Social settings
- Calm their nerves
- Addiction

There are many downfalls to alcohol because of the poor decisions people make while drinking

- Every year, thousands of people are injured and killed in accidents in which alcohol is involved

At the same time, the economic costs associated with alcohol reach more than \$100 billion every year

Some Individuals feel that alcohol contributes to too many injuries and deaths, and are strictly opposed to all consumption, while others who drink regularly may not see anything wrong with this behavior

# Treatments



- Before any treatment can be started the alcoholic must admit they have a problem otherwise they cannot be helped
- Next, they need to make the decision to stop drinking, many people will then attend AA.
  - Alcoholics Anonymous(AA) is an international mutual aid fellowship founded in 1935 by Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob Smith in Akron, Ohio. AA states that its primary purpose is to help alcoholics "to stay sober and help other alcoholics achieve sobriety".
  - There are also organizations like AA for the alcoholics family
  - Medical evaluation is often necessary when stopping the use of alcohol
- Some people need active outpatient treatment as well as inpatient treatment at a rehabilitation facility to discontinue the use of alcohol and remain sober without the possibility of a relapse right away.
- After this, maintaining sobriety and prevention of relapse is all up to the patient and the support from their family and friends
- Treatment will typically last 60-90 days depending on your willingness to stop drinking and the length of your addiction
- Certain programs start with approximately 30 day treatments





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